

REMARKS

Prior to entry of this amendment, claims 6, 8-10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18 and 20-24 are pending in the subject application.

By this amendment, claims 6, 8, 9, 12 and 23 are amended, dependent claim 25 is added, and claims 15, 17, 18, 20 and 21 are cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Support for the amendments may be found in, e.g., paragraphs [0016]-[0022] of applicants' originally filed specification. No new matter is added.

Consideration of claims 6, 8-10, 12, 14 and 22-24 is respectfully requested. Claim 6 is the sole independent claim.

A. Asserted Obviousness Rejection of Claims 6, 8-10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18 and 20-24

In the outstanding Office Action Made Final, the Examiner rejected claims 6, 8-10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18 and 20-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,871,417 to Nishizawa et al. ("the Nishizawa et al. reference") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,178,973 to Franca et al. ("the Franca et al. reference"). The rejection of claims 15, 17, 18, 20 and 21 is rendered moot by the cancellation of those claims. The rejection of the remaining claims is respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 6 now recites:

An apparatus for cleaning a semiconductor wafer, comprising:
a chamber in which a wafer is mounted;
a revolving chuck mounted in the chamber for supporting and fixing the wafer;
a nozzle for spraying cleaning solution onto the wafer;
a cover for covering an upper part of the chamber;
a laser fixed on an upper part of the cover for heating the wafer and the cleaning solution;
a focusing lens for condensing a beam emitted from the laser onto the wafer; and
a cooling water conduit surrounding an external wall of the cover for cooling the cover, the wafer, and the cleaning solution.

Applicants respectfully submit that neither the Nishizawa et al. reference nor the Franca et al. reference discloses, *inter alia*, a cooling water conduit surrounding an external wall of a cover, as now recited in independent claim 6.

For at least these reasons, applicants submit that the combination of the Nishizawa et al. reference and the Franca et al. reference fails to disclose all the features of independent claim 6, and thus, fails to anticipate, let alone render obvious, the subject matter of claim 6, as well as the subject matter of claims 8-10, 12, 14, 22-24, including new claim 25, which directly or indirectly depend from claim 6. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

B. February 1, 2007 Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants filed an Information Disclosure Statement including, two PTO-1449 forms; on February 1, 2007. Applicants have not yet received a copy of the signed and initialed PTO-1449 forms evidencing consideration of the references listed thereon. It is respectfully requested that, along with the next Patent Office communication, the Examiner return to applicants' undersigned representative a copy of the signed and initialed PTO-1449 forms.

C. Conclusion

If the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of the instant application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below to expedite resolution of any outstanding issues.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of this application is earnestly solicited, and an early and favorable further action upon all the claims is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

LEE & MORSE, P.C.

Date: February 28, 2007



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Attachments:

Request for Continued Examination
Petition for Extension of Time

LEE & MORSE, P.C.

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PETITION and
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT CHARGE AUTHORIZATION

This document and any concurrently filed papers are believed to be timely. Should any extension of the term be required, applicant hereby petitions the Director for such extension and requests that any applicable petition fee be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

If fee payment is enclosed, this amount is believed to be correct. However, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

Any additional fee(s) necessary to effect the proper and timely filing of the accompanying-papers may also be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.